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REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending and stand rejected.

Claims 11 has been cancelled.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 11.

Claims 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, and 13 have been amended to cite an "emulsion" polymer. This amendment is supported by original disclosure on page 5, line 10; page 6, line 13; and in Examples 1, 5, 6, and 7.

Restriction

Applicant affirms election, with traverse, to prosecute Group I – Claims 1-14.

35 U.S.C. 103**Lee and Valint, Jr.**

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the admitted state of the prior art taken with Lee, U.S. Patent Number 5,691,069 and Valint, Jr., U.S. Patent Number 5,135,297.

Lee

The Lee reference describes a mold stripping copolymer emulsion containing both hydrophobic monomers (styrene, butyl acrylate and methyl acrylate) as well as hydrophilic monomers (methacrylic acid and acrylic acid) in Example 1. As amended, Applicants claim a release composition comprising a copolymer and a rheology modifier. The rheology modifier is added to the release composition "to control the viscosity of the composition for ease of use in different manufacturing processes and equipment, and to control the uniformity and thickness of the coating." Page 8, lines 7-10. Since the Lee reference fails to teach or suggest Applicant's claim limitation of a rheology modifier, it fails to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Not only does the Lee reference fail to teach or suggest the claim limitation of a rheology modifier in the release composition, but it teaches away from such a limitation by describing the release composition and method for applying without ever teaching, or suggesting a rheology modifier. In column

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6, lines 24 to 29 the Lee reference describes the release coating as an acrylic based copolymer preferably applied from suspension in combination with a coagulating electrolyte. In Example 3, the Lee reference describes that "the copolymer and calcium nitrate as a coagulant were coated onto a mold." The mold is then immersed into a latex (rubber) solution.

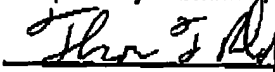
Valint, Jr.

The Valint Jr. reference describes a coating for contact lenses having a surface active macromer which is then cross-linked using ultraviolet light. The macromer of Valint is made from both hydrophilic and hydrophobic monomers, using solution polymerization in organic solvent. The macromer of Valint Jr. is not used on a mold for forming a natural or synthetic rubber article, as claimed by Applicant, but rather for contact lenses -thereby failing to teach all of Applicant's claim limitations and failing to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Additionally, the Valint Jr. reference teaches a solution solvent polymerization (Column 5, lines 57 and 58; column 11, lines 53 - 59; and in Examples 1-30). As amended, Applicants claim an emulsion polymer. One in the art would not be motivated by the Valint teaching of a solvent polymerization process to practice Applicant's claimed emulsion polymer. By failing to teach the emulsion polymer limitation of Applicant's amended claims, the Valint Jr. reference fails to present a *prima facie* case of obviousness.

Applicant respectfully submits that the foregoing is a complete response to the office action and requests the Examiner to remove all rejections and pass the application to issuance at this time.

Respectfully submitted,



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